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ABSTRACT

The articles collected in this issue are devoted to the topic of film in the English and language arts classroom. Titles include "Film Study: Some Problems and Approaches" (Judd Chesler), "The New Basic Skill: Film" (Harold H. Foster), "Caveat Viewer: Developing Viewing Perceptions" (Edward S. Dermon), "Shreds and Patches: Improvised Textbook" (Dorothy H. Hill), "110 Volt English Teaching" (Jane Bales), "Stimulating Creativity in the Classroom" (Shirley J. Jones), "Films for Children" (Jill P. May), "A Basic Library of Short Films: 50 Suggested Titles" (Ken Donelson), "Teleteach and the English Class: An Interview with Lewis Paige Sego" (Saul Rosenthal), and "NCTE Resolution on Promoting Media Literacy," as well as poems by Michael Dougherty, Michael Deeter, and Jill Lee and a call for manuscripts. (KS)

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CS 203 102

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JUDD CHESLER

# FILM STUDY: Some Problems and Approaches

For the past ten years or so there has been an explosion of interest in film all across the country. In secondary schools and universities, film is now being taught in a wide variety of contexts: as a key for understanding culture, fine art, language, and literature, as well as a discipline in its own right. The viewpoint offered here is that film should be understood in its own right before it is compared to, or used to explain, other things. Only in the past 20 years have film scholars begun to make strides toward understanding the complex nature of cinema. The results of these studies, however, seem not to have achieved general currency. Until recently, for example, most of the methodology for approaching film was borrowed from already established disciplines, for example, literary criticism and sociology. Now that film has been around for some 80 years, some perspective has been gained. With this perspective have come insights into the nature of cinematic art and film "language."

First, then, I would like to outline some of the problems which are involved in film study. Next, I will outline some approaches which seem most productive and which also seem to be conducive to curriculum formulations. I would also suggest that the approaches offered here could be taken as a necessary first step toward the application of film to other contexts.

## Problems

One problem which this article attempts to address is that many of the existing approaches to film study do not take into account the extremely complicated nature of film aesthetics. Briefly stated, film, more than any other medium, has a great variety of expressive means at its disposal, and usually it is a combination of these means that is brought into play. For example, film employs both time (like a novel) and space (like a painting). Another aspect is that film may include such dramatic means as acting, costume, and decor; photographic means such as camera angle and lens distortion; and purely filmic means such as camera movement and editing. Also, film may include various kinds of sound and various kinds of visual content.

Because of this multiplicity of means, film forms are also multiple. There is no such thing as "pure cinema." Nor is there a single and invariable concept of film "language" in the same way we understand written or spoken language. What actually exists is a number of conventional forms in which certain means have historically stabilized into patterns of combination. Hence we have documentary films, in which dramatic means are eschewed and realistic photographic qualities are emphasized; narrative films, in which dramatic qualities—e.g., story structure and characterization—dictate specific patterns of photographic and filmic organization;

and experimental films, in which, for the most part, dramatic means are discarded in favor of finding significant patterns of organization based on combinations of photographic and filmic qualities. Another point is that film may be very "realistic," as in some documentaries and in some narrative films, or film may be totally unrealistic, as in the case of cartoons. Moreover, there may be combinations and variations on the above-stated conventions.

The foregoing outline of some of the problems of film aesthetics is meant as an explanation of one basic point: film should be studied by approaches appropriate to the forms it takes. There are different kinds of films, and there are approaches which help explain their nature, conventions, and significance. Too many people misuse and misunderstand film because they have not first considered approaches which attempt to explain film on its own terms. For example, sociologists have done numerous content and response analyses of violence, first with film and then with television. All of this has been done without taking into account the aesthetic shaping involved. Violence in Westerns, for instance, is very different from violence in gangster films. In the classic Western, violence is very ritualized and often is emblematic of the personal style and values of the protagonist or the villain. Here the emphasis, even in cowboy and Indian battles, is not on carnage or gore (the camera seldom focuses on the results of violent actions), but it is on the manner in which a threat is treated. In the classic gangster film, violence is simply a means to an end. The gangster, usually a socially dispossessed figure, uses violence to become a success. Here violence can become ugly, but the questions which a gangster film raises about a society that often closes more traditional paths of success to individuals are often equally ugly. Also not taken into account in such studies is authorial shaping. Violence in Sam Peckinpah's films (e.g., *The Wild Bunch, Straw Dogs)* is quite different from the violence in Phil Karlson's films (e.g., *Walking Tall).* Peckinpah's slow-motion violence is an attempt to confront complacent audiences with their own violent urges. Peckinpah attempts to show that one cannot deal with personal or social violence unless one confronts the full scope of its reality. Karlson, on the other hand, sees violence as an acceptable outlet for current social frustrations.

Another misunderstanding of film centers around the idea of film "language." Teachers of film, as well as teachers of literature and grammar, often employ a notion, now discredited, which equates prose structures with narrative film structures. Thus, a shot equals a word, a scene equals a sentence, and a sequence equals a paragraph. At best, this notion is only a very loose analogy. I will not go into this subject in depth, except to say that, for example, a word is basically symbolic in nature and has ascribed meanings; a shot (just taking its visual aspect) is indexical in nature (a photo-chemical imprint of that which is in front of the camera), the meaning of which may only be derived through understanding a complicated system of interrelationships. Some of the factors involved include imagistic analogues in the real world as well as such factors as framing, composition, color, sound, and

structural context. There is always a simultaneity of means which articulate messages in a shot; a word uses relatively fewer means and almost always the symbolic one is dominant. On the other hand, in film, dialogue may be dominant (as in the "screwball" comedies of the 1930's such as *Bringing up Baby),* a visual element may be dominant (as in Chaplin's pantomime), or no one element may be dominant. A shot may be very complex and comprise an entire film (Andy Warhol's *Sleep);* on the other hand, a word is always a part of a larger pattern of organization. Even in narrative films modeled after literary forms, the shots, scenes, and sequences are less easily defined than their supposed literary analogues.

Having stipulated my basic reservations about some approaches of understanding film, I would now like to outline briefly those approaches which seem most productive.

## Approaches

### Genre

The notion of genre in film can be understood in two senses. First, there are the major divisions which historically have defined the three major film forms: the narrative feature, the documentary, and the avant-garde or experimental film. Secondly, there are generic subdivisions in each of these forms. The most widely understood sense of genre in film is the second one, especially as applied to American narrative feature films (Westerns, gangster films, musicals).

Documentary and avant-garde films can only be briefly described here. The documentary is a form which, like non-fiction in literature, is concerned more with mirroring the world or with making social or political argument than with personal expressiveness. A good introduction to the subject is Richard M. Barsam's *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History* (New York: Dutton, 1973). The avant-garde film has eschewed both the traditions of realistic representation and causal narrative order in favor of patterns of organization more closely related to modernist concerns in painting, music, and literature. Among these concerns are subconscious associations, randomness, motif, and reflexivity. David Curtis' *Experimental Cinema* (New York: Universe Books, 1971) and Sheldon Renan's *An Introduction to the American Underground Film* (New York: Dutton, 1967) are good introductions and both are suitable as secondary school texts. Standish Lawder's *Cubist Cinema* (New York: New York University Press, 1975) and P. Adams Sitney's *Visionary Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974) provide more detailed theoretical background.

What I would like to concentrate on, however, is genre in narrative feature films. Students are familiar with such works, and the study can even be extended to television material. The generic approach addresses the problem of discerning meaning in a type of film which on the surface seems to offer little except "escape" or entertainment. Moreover, this kind of film must appeal to a mass audience, is usually made by a *group* of artists, and is usually produced in an industrial atmosphere.

To begin with, the generic approach values films for their similarities rather than their uniqueness. What is sought is patterns of repetition in areas such as setting, character types, iconography, rituals and ceremonies, narrative structure, and theme. Questions concerning these elements often include: What is the most important element or elements in the genre? Can these elements be seen as social or cultural metaphors or myths? What is the generic theme, and how do the other elements relate to this theme?

It might be instructive to look at the example of the classic Western. The Western defines its own primary element as setting: the western frontier of the United States, usually historically fixed as the period between the end of the Civil War and 1900. Thematically, the tension in the Western has centered around the figure of the gunfighter/sheriff. He is an individual who initially went west to escape the confining forces of civilization, and to act out an older, more personal and direct code of behavior. Ironically, he often finds himself as the vanguard and eventually the protector (when he becomes sheriff or when he shoots his alter-ego, the villain) of the same civilization he sought to escape. Audiences have been fascinated with Westerns perhaps because Westerns express the ambivalence felt by a culture just recently propelled into an urban, industrial age.

Whatever the motivations of the producers of generic films (making money), the fact is that people of our culture make such films and try to please a mass audience who supposedly seeks escape. But in a way similar to the cultural expressiveness of folk art, generic film art seems to find forms which vividly express basically human or broadly cultural needs, anxieties, and attitudes. As it turns out then, generic art is one aspect of the aesthetic nature of entertainment. Genre study partially explains why generic art holds our fascination and entertains us. An excellent introduction to the subject, suitable for classroom use and containing useful filmographies, bibliographies, and charts is Stuart M. Kaminsky's *American Film Genres* (Dayton: Pflaum, 1974). Especially suitable for secondary school use are two books by Ralph Amelio: *Film in the Classroom* (Dayton: Pflaum, 1971) and *The Filmic Moment: An Approach to Teaching American Genre Film in the Classroom* (Dayton: Pflaum, 1975). Films Incorporated, a film distributor, has just come out with excellent film extract units which include taped lectures and study guides. For information write Films Incorporated, 1144 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois, 60091.

### Authorship

Another way of approaching narrative feature films is through authorship. In terms of conscious artistic creation, narrative films may be divided into two groups: those films in which all or most phases of film production (scripting, shooting, editing) are under the control of one creative mind, usually the film director, and those films which are products of the Hollywood (or any other) studio system. In the first instance, as in the films of many foreign directors such as Ingmar Bergman and Federico Fellini and contemporary American directors such as Stanley Kubrick, Francis Ford

Coppola, and Peter Bogdanovich, the authorship is self-evident. In the second case, however, it is not. Primarily, the notion of authorship—actually a critical methodology—addresses this second kind of cinema. The idea is to gather together the entire work of an individual director and to look at the films as a group to see if consistent elements of style and theme exist (despite the existence of other elements which may crop up, perhaps as the result of the contribution of other film artists in any given film). If such consistencies are found, one may tentatively proceed to create a construct called, for example, Hitchcock's style or Ford's themes. The benefits of such an approach should be obvious. For one thing, a great number of heretofore unappreciated studio output may be illuminated. Also, by mapping out the contributions of the one film artist, the director, who is responsible for most of what finally appears on the screen, a groundwork is established for discovering the contributions of other film artists.

Once authorial constructs have been extrapolated, they may also then be compared. Combined with the notion of genre, a student could, for example, compare the Westerns of John Ford with those of Howard Hawks. A book which contains some of the most interesting essays on authorship is Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen's *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). The essay by Peter Wollen is the most instructive. There are also numerous monographs available on individual directors. Robin Wood's books on Alfred Hitchcock and Howard Hawks are among the best. And Andrew Sarris's *The American Cinema* (New York: Dutton, 1968) offers a capsule commentary on a number of American and some foreign directors.

## Film History

One of the most popular approaches to film is to look at its history. Most orthodox film historians approach film history as the function of three basic determinants: technological (changes caused by sound, color, etc.), sociological (changes caused by studio control, the profit motive, appeal to a mass audience), and artistic (innovations made by individual artists). The emphasis in these books is on the idea of progress: films have gotten successively better and more sophisticated as the possibilities of the medium have been explored.

The basic problem with this approach is that there have been numerous other influences on narrative film history: movements in art and literature, influences of one artist on another, the influence of one genre on others. This information has just recently begun to be available—partly as a result of the approaches outlined above. As a consequence of new research in these areas, it seems that film history is not a smooth progression of development, but in fact it is full of stops and starts, parallel and intersecting paths, and isolated points.

Although some of the current and highly readable general film histories (Gerald Mast's *A Short History of the Movies* [Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1976], David Robinson's *The History of World Cinema* [New

York: Stein and Day, 1973], and Thomas Bohn and Richard Stromgren's *Light and Shadows* [Port Washington, New York: Alfred, 1975]) go over the high points and provide good filmographies and bibliographies, they do not explain some of the thornier issues of film history.

### Film Appreciation/Film Aesthetics

The greatest heat in film studies now centers around the idea of film "language." Orthodox notions which implied that personal critical acuity combined with a knowledge of the effects of camera angles, lenses, and editing gave magic access to films' secrets are now being discarded in favor of what is, hopefully, a more scientific—and therefore more objective—approach. This approach is semiology, or semiotics, the study of systems of signification. Semiology applied to film has so far focused primarily on structural elements and conventions in "classical" Hollywood cinema (finding discrete narrative units which are more precise than the notion of "shots," how the conventions of point of view are established, etc.). The notion of film's multiplicity of signifying systems as compared with written and spoken language, which I mentioned earlier, was one of the basic problems discovered by Christian Metz, one of the founders of film semiology. His books include *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* (New York: Oxford University, Press, 1974) and *Language and Cinema* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974).

The theoretical discourse in semiology is much too difficult, however, for secondary school courses. In fact, its appropriate level of study is the graduate level. But teachers who are serious about film study could pursue semiology on their own and offer the distillation to their students. Two invaluable sources are *Screen* magazine and its companion journal for teachers, *Screen Education*. (Both can be obtained from: *Screen*, 29 Old Compton Street, London, W1V 5PL.)

If this direction proves too difficult, a course of study involving units on genre, authorship, conventional narrative form, innovative directorial styles (e.g., Eisenstein, Welles), and, perhaps, some examples of documentary and avant-garde films might be considered. As an introduction to the course, one might familiarize students with the standard critical vocabulary. One of the best ways to do this is to show Sheldon Renan's film, *Basic Film Terms: A Visual Dictionary* (available for rental or sale from Pyramid Films, Inc., Box 1048, Santa Monica, California, 90406). James Monaco's *A Standard Glossary for Film Criticism* (New York: Zoetrope, 1973) is also a useful guide. Although there are many books on film appreciation which place emphasis on "technique," none of them is outstanding. They often place too much emphasis on idiosyncratic techniques in foreign "art" films and imply, as I stated earlier, that the mere use of technique equals art. The best of a bad bunch are: Ralph Stephenson and J. R. Debrix's *The Cinema as Art* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969), Louis Gianetti's *Understanding Movies* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall), and John Fell's *Film: An Introduction* (New York: Praeger, 1975). For narrative conventions, Arthur L.

Gaskill and David A. Englander's *How to Shoot a Movie Story* (Hastings-on-Hudson, New York: Morgan and Morgan, 1960) is quite revealing. Beware, however, of its condescending Dick and Jane approach. The Stephenson and Debrix book is intended primarily for university students. Finally, an invaluable resource for the film instructor is James Monaco's *Film: How and Where to Find Out What You Want to Know* (available from *Take One*, Box 1778, Station B, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3B 3L3), which lists film encyclopedias, film book bibliographies, indexes to periodical literature in film, glossaries, film journals, publishers' addresses, and indexes of 16mm rental sources.

Film is a large and complicated subject. An article of this sort can only touch on some of the high points. For those who are interested in more detailed information, it is hoped that the resources I have outlined will be helpful.

I personally believe that genre study would be one of the most interesting and rewarding approaches for secondary school students. Identification and interpretation of generic elements are intellectually rewarding exercises. In addition, it deals with material close to students' lives. Most importantly, perhaps it can instill in students the sense that art is something to which they naturally respond, and is not just something long ago or far away.

The snow is falling
Coming down like a great white wall
It's not fall.
Not fall with its brilliant colors.

It is now that nature puts on her great white gown.
She flies through the forest,
Through the huddled villages, across the fields . . .
All the creatures of the wood
the village and the field are asleep.
The only sound to be heard is that of the wind passing
through the trees.

There is only one light coming from the village,
And that from the blacksmith working deep into the night.

The snow ceases
And out comes the moon, the stars, Jupiter,
And all the heavens shine down upon the snow.

The village doctor passes out of a barn,
Leaving behind him the farmer, and
The just-born calf and its mother.
Outside, the moon shines down upon the snow.

—*Michael Dougherty*

HAROLD M. FOSTER

# THE NEW BASIC SKILL: Film

A tragic and horrible event occurred one day last year in Boston. A young woman was carrying a can of gasoline when a gang of young hoodlums stopped her. The gang forced her to pour the gasoline on herself and then they ignited it. The young woman died from her burns.

This event is noteworthy here for one reason. The night before this crime took place, the movie, *Fuzz*, was shown on television. In *Fuzz* a similar crime was depicted. The location for *Fuzz* was Boston.

Is there a connection between the movie and the real crime? The mayor of Boston and the Boston police think so. This would not be the first time a movie was the motivation for an act of violence.

Certainly, movies don't lead normal people into committing horrible crimes; movies affect most people in more subtle, hard-to-detect ways. Common sense and experience tells us that. Would American corporations spend millions for television advertising if it wasn't effective? Could the mass hysteria created by the *Exorcist* and the fear of water created by *Jaws* be caused today by another medium?

The large quantity of movies and television programs is another indication of the grip these media have on the minds and hearts of the public. The average young person spends one sixth of his waking time watching television. By the age of 16, he has spent more time watching television than he has spent in the classroom.[1] The college freshman has seen 500 movies in his lifetime, but has only read 25 novels.[2]

English teachers have particular insight into the influence of movies and television on young people. A class invited to write a play invariably borrows heavily from TV shows. Student writing will often contain references to popular TV programs or TV and film personalities. Conversations of young people often concern recent television shows or movies.

The quantity of film and TV viewing and its influence on young people are enormous, but, unfortunately, the quality of such experiences among the young is questionable. Robert Gessner wrote, "the rising generation is television prone but visually illiterate, which is ironic since cinema has become the private art form of younger people throughout the world."[3]

Visually literate people are less prone to be manipulated by these media and are capable of appreciating a wide range of such experiences. This form of literacy can and should be taught in the public schools. If basic skills can be defined as fundamental literacy tools necessary for coping with the world, then film should be considered a basic skill.

A major problem with teaching these media in the schools is that many English teachers who are called upon to teach film and television are not literate themselves in these fields. Most teachers are print oriented and

mistakenly apply literary criteria to film and television. Thus, films are discussed in terms of plot, theme, and characterization. For instance, teachers will ask students to study "hatred" in *West Side Story* or "competition" in *The Hustler*. Although these topics may prove stimulating, they will not provide the skills and knowledge required for film and television literacy.

To appreciate and control the influence of television and film, a person must understand how they can create an intense, emotional experience in the viewer. Visual literacy requires the ability to perceive and understand the structural elements used in film and television. These elements separate the film experience from the literary experience. In a sense, these elements are the basic components of film language.

The structural elements basic to film are editing, composition, movement, lighting, color, and sound. The filmmaker uses these elements in a myriad of ways to achieve his effects.

Perhaps editing is the most manipulative of all these elements. Editing is unique to the technical nature of film. Film is printed on a strip of celluloid, and each photographic image is recorded on a single frame. The illusion of movement is achieved by passing each photographic image past a light at a certain speed (24 frames per second in sound film). Editing is the process of cutting the strip of film and taping it together with other strips of film.

Two early Russian filmmakers, Sergei Eisenstein and V.I. Pudovkin, experimented with this simple technical process and achieved great effects. They used film to propagandize audiences to support the Russian revolution. Eisenstein discovered that with the careful juxtaposition of two separate images, a third, more lasting impression could be created in an audience, and Pudovkin experimented with using a series of images to build moods and emotions in an audience. Both Eisenstein and Pudovkin, familiar with the manipulative power of film, based part of their editing aesthetics on Pavlovian principles of conditioning.

Today these forms of suggestive editing are most obvious in television commercials. Coca-Cola flashes one bright, fun-filled image after another on the screen. The last image, that of the Coke bottle, then stands alone, yet, subconsciously the public associates it with pretty girls, beach parties, and dancing. In the McDonald's commercials, the speed of the editing and the dynamic music create a youthful energy that is meant to elicit enthusiasm and excitement among viewers.

Composition refers to the objects, people, and places that are seen within the camera shot. The images the filmmaker selects and their relationship to each other in the shot are extremely important elements of a film. The closeups that characterize Frederick Wiseman's documentaries such as *High School* or *Law and Order* create a strong sense of involvement among viewers. When Cary Grant and company climb the massive, solid rock sculpture formations of Mount Rushmore in *North by Northwest* the human figures communicate antlike smallness and insignificance in visual comparison with the giant sculptured Presidents' heads.

Motion in film takes many forms. It may mean the movement of people or objects within the shot, the movement of the camera (tracking and panning), movement created by mechanical devices within the camera (slow motion, fast motion), or movement created by the editing process.

Lighting is an important, but often unnoticed, element of filmmaking. The effects created by lighting do much to create feelings in viewers. The dark lighting of much of *In Cold Blood* helps convey the somber, tragic mood of this film. The cheerfulness of many moments in *The Sound of Music* is reinforced by bright, sunlit scenes.

Color is an important element in films. The sepia and soft, amber tones of *Romeo and Juliet* not only remind one of a Renaissance tapestry, but also emit a warm, romantic feeling. In *Women in Love* there is a constant flow of reds and oranges, deep hues and fleshy colors to give that film a lusty, sensuous feeling.

Finally, sound cannot be ignored. Most people recognize the musical cliches that signal Indians on the horizon, cavalry coming through the pass, the bad guy lurking in the bushes, or the monster rising from the sea. Music can be so important that some films are remembered primarily for this feature. This may be true of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Moon River) or *Elvira Madigan* (a Mozart piano concerto). Also, background noises and dialogue can be as important as music in achieving an effect.

The structural elements briefly discussed here are the backbone of the newest basic skill. Once students begin to understand these elements and how they are used, they will be on their way to visual literacy.

**FOOTNOTES**

[1]Martin A. McCullough, "Mass Media Curriculum: Fantasy or Reality?" *Readings for Teaching English in Secondary Schools*, ed. Theodore W. Hipple (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1973), p. 234.

[2]W. R. Robinson, ed., *Man and the Movies* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 4.

[3]Robert Gessner, *The Moving Image: A Guide to Cinematic Literacy* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1968), p. 18.

EDWARD S. DERMON

# CAVEAT VIEWER: Developing Viewing Perceptions

Charles Braverman's *The Sixties* (Pyramid Films), a compilation of moments from the nineteen-sixties, is a gold mine for demonstrating propaganda techniques and inculcating enlightened viewing habits. Before showing the film, I ask my students what they would expect a film dealing with the nineteen-sixties to be about. That is, what events and personalities would they expect to be included? I have shown this film for the past five years and I'm always amazed by how many students have almost no recollection of that decade. Nonetheless, when members of an entire class combine their recollections, they soon fill the blackboard with many of the same incidents that Braverman included in his film.

After viewing the film, we look at the list on the board to see what Braverman omitted. In my Long Island school district, some of my students are perturbed that he did not include the Mets' World Series victory. Discussing why Braverman did not include that event can be of value. Students tend to take a provincial view of life, and it can be beneficial to work at broadening their perspectives.

Of greater teaching value is examining what Braverman included that students would omit or alter. If this is a film that purports to portray the nineteen-sixties, then events and personalities should be accorded the proper time proportional to their importance. A student in 2076, after viewing this film, should have a somewhat accurate feel for the decade. Many students believe that Braverman portrays the decade as being much too violent a period. Indeed there are many scenes of the Vietnam war and civil rights marches and college protests and assassinations. These students want to know why Braverman didn't include more scenes that depict the decade in a happier light.

*The Sixties* is one of the most provocative films I have used, for as soon as one student makes the above criticism, another student will counter that the decade was basically a violent one and that that is why the film has many violent moments. Moreover, other students will add that the film does include happy moments and will cite as evidence the presence of scenes of Woodstock, the Beatles, the twist, and the moon launching. (Just as soon as the moon shot is mentioned as a positive achievement, another student will vehemently assert that that event was a negative achievement. Whatever the relative merits of this event, this division can serve to illustrate the fact that rarely in today's complex world are things black or white, that there are often at least two ways to look at the same incident.)

Students, nevertheless, are in agreement that the Beatles played an important role in the decade and they believe that including the Beatles helps to add a more positive note. Someone will almost always add that Braverman should have devoted more time to the Beatles than he did. *The Sixties*

is an excellent film to help students realize that an artist must be selective. In a 15-minute film about the sixties, how much time should a filmmaker who wants accurately to portray the period devote to the Beatles? Much as students would like to say the entire 15 minutes, they are honest in their responses. They do begin to appreciate the difficulties of a filmmaker endeavoring to accomplish what Braverman was aiming at. (Incidentally, Braverman allotted 30 seconds to the Beatles.)

Besides the time allocated to various events, subject matter is obviously important. Braverman's segment of the Beatles shows them at a press conference. Although students will concede that Braverman's time allotment for the Beatles is defensible, they find it extremely difficult to justify his not including the Beatles at a concert. A similar question of selection occurs in Braverman's inclusion of a segment of the so-called "Great Debates" between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. The segment selected is not a scene from the actual debate, but the preparation for that event.

The Great Debates segment can lead to an investigation of what I think is the most valuable aspect of the film for teaching purposes, a consideration of objectivity in film documentaries. Spiro Agnew may be gone, but the problem of media objectivity remains, and an intelligent viewing of *The Sixties* must examine the question of whether the film is objective. This is a question that students *never* consider. Because media objectivity is such an important matter and because it is a concept that is difficult to grasp, teachers must exert especial care to render this subject intelligible. On this subject, teachers should not overestimate their students' knowledge and should not be afraid of moving at too slow a pace. I write on the blackboard, "Did Braverman intend to influence the viewer's judgment?" and "Did Braverman intend not to influence the viewer's judgment?" Next to the first sentence I write, "A *subjective* presentation," and next to the second I write, "An *objective* presentation."

One method to lead students to an understanding of the concept of objectivity is to focus exclusively on the Great Debate segment, asking whether Braverman was for or against Richard Nixon or whether it is impossible to determine. Although many students affirm that there is no way to tell, others believe that Braverman selected unflattering shots of Nixon. Such an opinion is at least debatable. What is not debatable is that Braverman did select actual scenes from an event. Does a filmmaker have to select certain shots of an individual to be objective? Isn't that kind of selectivity a form of subjectivity? Moreover, who is to say what is or is not flattering?

To be used most effectively, *The Sixties* should be shown three times. After a third viewing some students will be able to discern a very subtle kind of subjectivity. Braverman shows Nixon at his famous "final" press conference, the one in which he told reporters that they wouldn't "have Nixon to kick around anymore." Braverman then cuts to John F. Kennedy at the Berlin wall. The transition, however, is not so innocent as the above description might seem. Between these two events Braverman indulges in cinematic manipulation. That is, while the screen shows the scene of Nixon at his press conference, the sound track carries, for a few crucial seconds, the

exuberant applause for Kennedy at Berlin. The effect, however, entirely unnoticed on the conscious level by the untutored viewer of film, is to share in wishing riddance to Nixon. The slant is difficult to detect, but unmistakably present. This device is an eye-opener for many students, who seem for the very first time to be aware of the powers and possibilities of a skillful filmmaker.

Although I find the above sequence to be the best for teaching ways in which filmmakers may manipulate their audiences, there are other fine scenes on which to dwell. There is, for example, a heartrending shot depicting Biafran children. The faces of these unfortunate souls speak volumes. I ask my students to state what Braverman had included immediately before and immediately after that scene. (Before the second viewing, I instruct my students to jot down all the events in order that Braverman selected.) Nevertheless students are rarely able to answer the question accurately. They respond that the shot before was of Robert Kennedy and the one after was of Richard Nixon at a political rally. In fact, however, the shot just before was a few seconds of white, with "nothing" being shown on the screen. The effect of this technique is to "cushion" the cut from Robert Kennedy to the plight of the Biafrans. There is, however, no cushion between the Biafrans and Nixon. His smiles and extravagances follow immediately. Is Braverman's camera "talking" in these sequences? Students may differ in their opinions, but they must consider what Braverman did and why he did it. Moreover, they should consider the order of events. Would the viewer's impressions have been any different if Braverman had had Nixon precede the Biafrans and Kennedy follow? As Braverman filmed the sequence, does the Biafran tragedy linger in the mind of the viewer, thus affecting his impression of Nixon? Does a filmmaker take these questions into consideration? Should he? These are the kinds of questions that should and must be raised to foster the kind of awareness and sensitivity that our students must develop if they are to be intelligent viewers, thinkers, and citizens.

DOROTHY M. HILL

# SHREDS AND PATCHES: Improvised Textbook

Few suburban school systems today can offer teachers an extended composition curriculum budget; no urban ones can. Money to buy contemporary materials is less plentiful. Many teachers of language arts are given some money to buy film and tape for student use, however. I suggest that student films, slides, tapes, and writing—results and proof already of the learning process—be used in turn to encourage new writing, to satisfy students' hunger for relevance, and to help fill the curriculum gap.

Last year two of my senior English classes worked with cameras purchased for them. We did two-partner films, slide-tapes expressing individual depth, and a "monster" movie which one 20-member class worked on excitedly morning after morning at seven. (One reel of that film suffered accidental death in a commercial developing machine.) In addition, by May there was an assorted box of slides and film clips—hall scenes, cafeteria and stadium shots, pictures of parks and city streets and back yards.

I was looking for something new to stimulate writing. All those scraps ought to have some use, I thought. They did. With them we created a documentary of the just completed senior year.

First I gave the box of miscellaneous slides—taken at different times for different reasons (photo essay, interview, exuberance at the first snowfall)—to two students, asking that they arrange the slides in an order to suggest writing topics. They rejected many slides which were good photographs but not so evocative for them as others less well done. Adding background music, Simon and Garfunkel's "Cathy's Song,"

> And from the shelter of my mind
> Through the window of my eyes
> I gaze beyond the raindrenched trees
> To a land where my heart lies. . . .

they created an experience for the other students, showing the slides with the music. After the first showing, I asked the students in the two classes to take notes as we looked at the slides again—notes about whatever memories, hopes, dreams came into their minds. After that they were free to write whatever they chose, imposing structure on their ideas: poem, essay, reminiscence, comment. During the two class periods that followed, as they wrote and rewrote, they could use the projector in a corner of the room to see again slides they needed.

A few students tuned out the whole experience. The slides meant nothing to them, they wrote; this was merely a collection of pictures. They had their chance to express dissent. Most, however, made some connection with their environment or personal philosophy like this student's comment on the students photographed outside the school:

> Every day the same faces sit perched on the railing like hawks. Each year the potential in their faces seems to decrease.

I returned the compositions marked with my comments as usual and turned my thoughts toward final exams.

But the ideas I had read in those papers stayed in my mind, probably because commencement was imminent. The students who had written those words and who circled the paths of the school on film would soon be a part of history.

Reviewing the writing, I saw that the writers had focused on several repeated subjects: the irrevocable past; separation pains; the tenuousness of the present. Many students were incredibly sensitive to the future. Some of them wrote in aphorisms:

> The past is the past. I no longer live in it; I can only remember it. . . .
>
> I will break the bars that hold me back and enter another world with new and different kinds of bars.
>
> I am alone now. I can no longer be dependent on anyone else to think or decide for me. . . .
>
> I never want to stop growing, experiencing, and living life to its fullest. . . .
>
> I want to make change, I want to make a mark—even though sometimes I'd just like to sleep and let the world go by. . . .
>
> It's not the end of the world, just the end of a part of my world. . . .

I put together the compositions into a single script. There seemed to be a pattern to the thoughts. At the approach of "the end," some students felt buoyant, some melancholy. They measured the past. They needed to grow. They felt confident about the future, then afraid. They thought about death.

The seniors were now released from classes. I called back two boys and two girls to read the script on tape. I corrected exams while they decided on background music (Cat Stevens: "It's a Wild World"), portioned out parts for each other, and made a tape, miraculously free of change-of-class bells and public address announcements. It took them two hours, and then they left to finish arrangements for graduation parties.

I still thought about the slides and films. Too bad we hadn't been able to start it all earlier. Couldn't they be put together with the script? By chance another student returned to talk one afternoon. She had been one of the most creative, and after hearing the tape she began arranging the slides to fit it. She returned again and again, studying, almost agonizing over the appropriate fit of words and pictures.

I was still copying grades when she brought in a friend from another high school. Having had some training in film work, he helped her arrange the film fragments into a sequence. They rejected the monster movie reel as too artificial, then spliced and planned and spliced again.

We looked at the result; slides and film running with taped comments. They liked it, but regretted that there was not more film.

One more step. Instead of sitting in the audience at commencement, I roamed around the balcony of Pittsburgh's Civic Arena, filming with a class camera the lines of seniors filing into the program area on the ground floor. Adding this footage to the film reel we had spliced, I had enough film now to run almost the whole time of the tape. The result—slides, tape, film—was a documentary that made a vivid and poignant comment on 1974-1975 at Peabody High School.

I have already used this documentary for discussion and writing with this year's seniors. The results have been equally interesting and immediate. As one student said, "These slides really bring me face to face with the future."

Of course the students this year, encouraged by what another class has already done, will produce something different with their 1976 voice. Who knows what response the 1976 voice, played back in 1977, will evoke?

We all know the power of the visual. That this power can aid the writing process is exciting. That the process of filming, viewing, and writing can bring the students face to face with themselves—this is what teaching writing is all about. These days, if such a process helps the curriculum budget in even a small way by providing a sort of fluid textbook, it is practical as well.

I wonder if I'm in your poetry too
Dangling in between the lines
Like a memory
Of some long-ago poem
Written at some long-ago place

I wonder if my life and your words intermingle
Confusing themselves in the jangle
Scattering their seeds
And running and jumping on some hallucinogenic playground
Falling, as if out of the sky
And occasionally, unintentionally,
finding the page.

Or perhaps like a vagrant you find me
Trespassing among the stanzas
And attempt to chase me away, almost
half-heartedly
Then just leave me there, attempting to
ignore me
And trying
To turn to another page.



*—Michael Deeter*

JANE BALES

# 110 Volt English Teaching

Filmmaking and other forms of visual expression may be employed in the English curriculum in a variety of ways—as an alternative to a composition or term paper, as a unit in a traditional English class, or as an elective. Visual expression lends itself well to the phase-elective program for a semester or for nine weeks. This elective is particularly attractive to today's students, who have grown up in a visual technological society. They are not afraid of equipment. Many can express themselves in visual language better than they can in oral or written language. In some cases, visual expression helps them with other forms of communication, especially with the organization of ideas.

Some school administrators may fear the cost of equipment or the cost to the student. Most of our equipment was not purchased directly by the school corporation. Our Super 8 camera (a Bell and Howell Filmosound with single frame action) was a gift from a senior class. A second Super 8 camera, a gift from the 1973 seniors, will be purchased this year. Another senior class gift was the Kodak Super 8 projector. Videotape equipment was purchased with money from a faculty basketball game. A Kodak Ektagraphic slide projector was a gift from a local sorority. We have in addition, a Kodak Ektagraphic visualmaker to make slides, overhead, opaque, filmstrip, and 16mm projectors, cassette and reel-to-reel recorders, record players, a viewer, splicer, dry mount press, slide sorter, copy stand, etc. Some students use their parents' cameras. There is no lab fee for the class, but students pay for their own film and processing. Throughout the course some students spend as little as $5.00, some as much as $20.00.

Our filmmaking course (Media E435), a nine-week elective, enrolls mainly juniors and seniors, some of whom have never held a camera; other students have made several films. Many are creative; most are enthusiastic.

As soon as possible, the camera is put into the hands of the students who hold and operate it (without film). On the second day of class I explain the camera and tripod to students. During the first week we take a film walk, passing two cameras (the school's and my Kodak XL55) among the students. Each student has an opportunity to shoot about ten feet of film, striving for some kind of continuity. One boy shot circles—car tires, bicycle wheels, man-hole covers, fire hydrants (from above), basketball hoops (from below), cans (from the end), cylinders (with a girl looking through). One student took doors, another running water, another classmates on playground equipment, another the backs of people's heads. These films were available the second week for viewing and discussion.

To fulfill requirements for the class, each student must:

1. film and edit a three-minute Super 8 film complete with script or storyboard, credits, and sound;

2. participate in two group projects—film walk and doodle film;
3. make a flip book;
4. read the text and pass a test on film terms;
5. complete a project from the following: Super 8 experimental film, 16mm scratch or doodle film, videotape of his own commercial or program, zoetrope, slide-tape presentation, filmstrip with sound, photo essay, transparency-overlay project; and
6. view and evaluate student films.

In the first weeks of the class, students read the textbook, Larsen's *Young Filmmakers,* which has an excellent glossary. I give a test on film terms before the half-way point in the class. Students must retake the test until they make an adequate score. Dittoed papers on film time, film tips, and camera and credit helps are distributed.

The first individual assignment is to make a simple flip book. A small blank booklet of 20 or 30 stapled pages is given each student, who uses a nylon-tipped pen to draw simple items which seem to move when the pages are flipped. This exercise resulted in the following: a clock with moving hands, a dancing girl, a growing flower, a running lady bug, words writing themselves. This activity helps students with handdrawn films and animation.

The second project for the class involves making a 16mm film without a camera. This is done by scratching the emulsion from black exposed film or by marking with ink and pens, brushes, sponges, etc. or by transparency-marking fine-tipped pens on clear acetate film or on exposed film which has been bleached. Free used 16mm film is frequently available from television stations or from athletic departments. For bleaching film one should work outside, wear rubber gloves, and use a plastic bucket for the bleach; then one wipes the film with a rag, rinses in a bucket of lukewarm water, and wipes again. Level-top desks are then placed side by side, and film is strung over these and through film jigs. Film jigs can be made from cardboard with dittoed papers indicating frames glued to them (use rubber cement). Each student has ten feet of film. Before creating our own films, we see Norman McLaren's hand-drawn films and films students have made in previous classes. The results may be a ball getting larger or smaller, vertical lines becoming closer or wider, frogs leaping or waving, stick figures turning somersaults, words printing themselves, gulls flying, etc.

Throughout the nine weeks we see and discuss as many films as possible. We discuss content and technique. Braverman films are used to acquaint students with kinestasis. *The Refiner's Fire,* a student-made rental film shows animation techniques. We rent some films; *Basic Film Terms: A Visual Dictionary* is the most helpful of these rented films. We also use free films; the best are from the Canadian Consulate. We use student-made films from Kodak and those from former students.

The main project of the class, a Super 8 film, may be a narrative film based on literature, for example, *Beowulf,* "The Little Girl and the Wolf" by James Thurber, "Isabel" by Ogden Nash; students may compose their own

original scripts for this assignment. For example, students may produce a documentary of a person (such as a person in a retirement home or a cross country runner) or a place (such as Louie's Candy Shop) or a subject (such as Arthur Barron used in "Birth," "Death," "Essay on Loneliness") or an event (such as a rock concert). Students may, as an alternative, create a film-essay—a mood film based on a poem (such as one by Leonard Cohen or Pablo Neruda), or of a person (such as a child), or of a place (such as a cemetery or a river), or an idea (war and death should be avoided) or of a thing (such as a bull-dozer). Students may shoot with regular motion, slow motion (fast shutter), pixilation, kinestasis, or many forms of animation—puppet, torn paper, clay, cel animation. (*Making It Move* is an excellent book on animation and pixilation.) Before students write scripts, they are shown sample scripts from former students and professionals. (I use Barron's script from "Parker Addison, Philosopher".) They are given storyboard forms and are encouraged to study such traditional comic strips as "Mary Worth" and "Steve Canyon" for storyboard techniques. They are shown how to make and use narration frames.

I alert students to common errors in filmmaking, such as panning too fast, trying to synchronize sound and lip movement (nearly impossible with Super 8), shaking the camera (encourage use of tripod), overuse of zoom, too little planning (follow storyboard or script), inadequate light, and inadequate time allowance.

Experimentation is encouraged. A student electing to do a whole experimental film may simulate a flight and landing of a plane, or he may shoot a film while riding a minibike or a merry-go-round. He may try pixilation (making inanimate objects move) or experiment with various tracking and dollying shots—being pulled on a blanket, in a wagon, moved on a bicycle, or in a wheelchair.

Students electing slide-tape projects are encouraged to go beyond the usual putting-picture-to-a-song presentation. I encourage them to take original slides when possible, except where they want unusual pictures from magazines or slides of fine art. An inexpensive way to make credits is to scratch exposed slides, or draw on clear slides, or type on frosted slides. Narration slides can be made by using black-and-white film, photographing typewritten lines, and using the negative; the result is white lettering on grey background. Spoken narration over music is superior to music only. Narration may be completely original or coupled with the poetry and prose of others.

Students who elect filmstrips may have a specific use in mind, such as making a filmstrip of simply-drawn objects accompanied by a foreign language word for use with beginning language classes. (A filmstrip on how to make filmstrips is available from International Film Bureau in Chicago.) We buy our frosted blank filmstrip, but make our own filmstrip jig that shows the students where to mark frames. We also made a desktop unit with a tilted top containing glass with a light beneath. The student marks "Start" on frame two, "Focus" on frame six. The filmstrip begins with a title frame on frame seven. The student draws, paints, or types on the frosted

side. Water soluble oil paint (such as Pentel) works well. He may paint on two filmstrips and put the frosted sides together for a three-dimensional effect. Bits of colored gelatin, leaves, etc. may also be used.

Students who elect a transparency project, consisting of script and pictures, use overlays or roll-type transparencies.

Students are encouraged to mix media—to use slides, transparencies and tapes, to do a live dance or simple drama with a slide and music background, to use black light, strobe light, or mirrors (to deflect images), to use multiple screens, screens made of collages, or rear screens (a screen for rear projection may be made from a frosted plastic shower curtain or table cloth).

Videotape projects, informational or creative, may be made of original commercials, excerpts from existing stories (The Porta-Pak was used to do the tree scene from *A Separate Peace),* or interviews.

A zoetrope may be simply made to help students understand the concept of still objects seeming to move. A cardboard strip is slotted, and a simple design is drawn on one side. It is mounted on a record turntable (design on inside). When the record player is turned on and one looks through the slots, the drawn object seems to move. (The zoetrope is explained in *Making It Move.)*

All projects are shown to the class, discussed, and evaluated. For the Super 8 films, students use evaluation sheets to judge the films. They are rated on content, technique, and overall effect. Students consider the use of the camera, the originality of credits (not merely lettered on cardboard), and the quality of the sound track.

We take field trips to tour a television station in a nearby city, to the studio of an independent filmmaker, and to the radio-television station at the local college.

Our state has an annual Media Fair, where students may enter films, slide-tapes, and other work for judging. On the basis of this judging our students were asked to show films at the Indiana Film Council Conference.

John Carlisle, a professor at Purdue-Calumet, hosts a television show, "Filmmakers' Showcase," and encourages students to send their films for showing. Students are invited for taped interviews for these programs. Five shows this year were devoted to films and interviews of our students.

This year students helped me conduct a children's filmmaking workshop as part of a children's art workshop in the county arts festival. One evening the community center in a nearby city invited students and me to show and explain students' filmmaking. We show films as part of a display night at our school. These film showings help acquaint the public with the creative ways students express themselves visually.

Filmmaking is not an easy class. Students must plan carefully and must communicate well. They must plan their films to have logical beginnings, middles, and endings. Point of view (camera angle) and transitions (from shots and sequences) must be developed.

Teachers shouldn't worry if they don't know all the answers, since they can usually find answers in many good resource books. The main requisites

for the teacher and the student are interest and enthusiasm. This article should provide everything you wanted to know about teaching filmmaking if you were afraid to try.

## REFERENCES

**Textbook:**

Larson, Rodger with Ellen Meade, *Young Filmmakers.* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1969.) (Avon paperback)
This book is easily read and understood by high school students. It shows Larson's work with teenagers. The glossary is excellent. It is inexpensive—95c.

**Best Resource Books:**

Caynik, David. *Film: Real to Reel.* (Winona, Minnesota: St. Mary's College Press, 1972.)
This is an interesting book for film study. A teacher's guide is available.

Glen, George D. and Charles B. Scholz. *Super 8 Handbook* (Indianapolis: Howard Sams and Company, 1974.)

Rynew, Arden. *Filmmaking for Children and Motion Picture Production Handbook.* (Dayton: Pflaum/Standard, 1973.)
This book is best used with elementary and junior high students.

Smallman, Kirk, *Creative Filmmaking.* (New York: Bantam, 1972.)
This book is directed toward young filmmaking students. It would be a good supplementary text. It includes a good sample shooting script.

Sohn, David. *Film: The Creative Eye.* (Dayton: Pflaum, 1970.)
This book includes interviews with filmmakers and analyses of short films such as those by Saul Bass, Braverman, etc.

Trojanski, John and Louis Rockwood. *Making It Move.* (Dayton: Pflaum/Standard, 1973.)
This book is excellent for animation and pixilation at any level. A teacher's handbook and 16mm film are also available.

**Film Rental:**

Indiana University Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana 47405. (Universities rent films considerably cheaper than distributors.)

International Film Bureau, 332 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

Pyramid Films, Inc., Box 1048, Santa Monica, California 90406.

SHIRLEY J. JONES

# Stimulating Creativity in the Classroom

*Why Man Creates* (Pyramid Films, Inc., color, 25 minutes) is an excellent film for introducing college freshmen to their own talents for creating intellectually exciting or humorous, well-structured themes by providing a stimulus for discussion and writing.

Although I stress the rules of grammar—requiring that students read and use a handbook to help them write and later to correct or to rewrite their themes—I prefer to stimulate their imaginations before I offer them structured patterns for developing their expository essays. We do many ten-minute writing exercises throughout the semester; they are the only writings we do for the first couple of weeks of classes. On the fourth or fifth class session, I show *Why Man Creates*.

The film is divided into eight parts, of which the first four are an outline for creating generally, but which I apply directly to writing. Part one is "The Edifice"—the idea; part two, "Fooling Around"; part three, "Work: The Process"; and part four, "The Judgment".

These four parts parallel the same four steps the writing student must follow: (1) finding and limiting his topic; (2) deciding upon his point of view by visualizing his audience and by deciding what question he will answer; (3) assembling and organizing his ideas; and finally (4) editing and critically evaluating his finished work.

"The Edifice" explores man's ideas from the beginning of Western thought. This animated section, which begins with primitive man making his first communicative grunts and his first attempts to band together for greater strength, rapidly runs through man's developing ideas through the centuries, arriving in the present age with man, hidden within the polluted air, standing at the top of a huge mound of junk, coughing profusely and crying, "Help!"

In the discussion which follows the film, I ask the students how they feel about this view of the modern world, whether they feel it is too pessimistic, how they feel about inheriting such a world. The topic this leads us into is, of course, pollution. We discuss how and why such a situation was allowed to develop, which introduces many students to the idea of Progress and to our culture's unlimited faith in science to produce a utopia—"the best of all possible worlds"—and to correct or to balance any adverse effects modern inventions might have on the environment. In one exercise they must list some product or habit or convenience that they would be willing to give up so that their children might also enjoy a beautiful world. At a later time I ask them to write, as an exercise which receives a grade, their view of the world of the future. This last assignment actually sprang out of my irritation with an entire class that, assigned to have read an article "Apocalypse Chic" in *Newsweek* (February 17, 1975), could not tell me the

meaning of "apocalypse." Their theme could be in the form of a straight prophecy (I predict), a newspaper article, an essay, a play, a poem, or a short story. It could be as long as it needed to be; but, unless it was a poem, it had to be at least a paragraph of two hundred words.

Part two, "Fooling Around," convinces most students that this film is fun and that creating often involves presenting the unexpected. Since most of my students have just been through their first registration day, they relate knowingly to the representation of man as a programmed robot who responds to his many numerical identification "tags." I can ask them to write of situations in which they have felt themselves to be programmed robots. Or instead we can discuss the importance of numbers in their lives, of the significance of "being number one," of being "second best" or of the significance of such "magic" numbers as three, seven, or thirteen. Then I ask them to write about the significant number (or numbers) in their lives.

Part three, "Work: the Process," depicts beautifully all that an English teacher preaches regarding organizing and building a theme. In this section an "artist" works with styrofoam blocks, many sizes, which fall, float away, even repel each other. His "creations" collapse repeatedly. One collapse causes his arm to go through one block; thus he is inspired and quickly and deftly assembles his "work of art."

These styrofoam blocks symbolize both the materials for writing and the writer's ideas. That is, they are the words, the sentences, and the paragraphs that a writer builds with in constructing a theme; or they are the ideas the writer tries to fit together to communicate his thoughts to others to elicit a desired response.

Alone, this gem of clarity would be a boring harangue endured wearily by harried students. But presented in the context of this original and imaginative film, the "work process" is recognized as a creative process shared by all men. The recognition of the student's own latent talents frequently works as an incentive to experiment with ideas. For those students who already have confidence in their imaginative powers, the film works as an intoxicant.

Part four, "The Judgment," depicts manifold reactions to the artist's creation, presenting mainly hostile criticism; and the artist, attired in cowboy boots and black hat, is literally shot down.

I've asked myself repeatedly, "Why doesn't this section kill the students' incentive?" for certainly such criticism of their own endeavors is exactly what they, as students, have been receiving for years. The answer must be the students' evaluations of their efforts and of their finished work are different from the critical comments made by the individuals in the film. The students, as I do, recognize that the artist has created a work of balanced parts, one which makes a statement as only he might say it.

Part five, "A Parable," emphasizes the worth of individual expression. A ping-pong ball reject becomes symbolic of a Christ-like figure about which legends and myths arise. This section, then, reinforces the students' determination to express their own creativity.

Though we discuss the parable, it is not until later in the semester that I make an assignment that might initiate the writing of parables. In the continuing discussion of language, I introduce something I found in Willard R. Espry's *The Game of Words* (Grosset and Dunlap, 1972) entitled "Anguish Languish" written by Professor Howard Chase whose hobby is that of reproducing folk tales in his unique "anguished" language, including the "mural" of each tale (pp. 48-49). I have, on occasion included Maurice Sendak's *Pierre: A Cautionary Tale* (Harper and Row, 1962) which also has a moral. When comparing the similarity between these tales and the parable in the film viewed earlier in the semester, the students begin to see the didactic nature of a variety of literary forms. When asked to write a responsive exercise to our exploration of the moral tales, some students produce their own moral tales.

As one of my objectives in a writing course is to introduce the students by short ungraded exercises to the various techniques of developing ideas, the students feel free to experiment with the techniques in this short form. These papers are marked and commented upon by me and corrected and often improved by the students. Such work is time consuming, but I'm convinced that it gives students the confidence to experiment when they are writing for a grade, for there is, in general, a brightened quality in the later themes.

Part six, "A Digression," is a spot reminder, given by a snail, that the history of man is a record of change. This digression is, in effect, a summary of part one and acts as a bridge to part seven.

But I use "digression" first for an early exercise done as homework. The student sits in a busy place; he may be watching television at home where he is relaxing, but he has with him pen and paper. As his mind is pulled away from the main activity, or as thoughts spring to past experiences, he jots down his mental responses to his surroundings. He needs to allow at least 20 minutes for this exercise. Finished, the paper is a record of digressions; and the student learns he has experimented with stream of consciousness writing.

Another exercise related to this follows soon afterwards. For it I use Henry Reed's "Lessons of War: The Naming of Parts" and a short (60-80 words), well-chosen paragraph from the handbook, one which is giving directions for creating a unified paragraph. (A sneaky way to drill!) As they do not see the poem's structure, reading the poem bewilders many students. In discussion, they quickly grasp an understanding of its pattern. We then look at the unity of a well-structured paragraph that uses a topic sentence and that links its sentences through a transitional device and the use of reference pronouns. I then give them a writing exercise using the paragraph chosen for drill as "a cage of form" in which they entrap their own thoughts which spring from work associations. They must keep the exact wording and punctuation of the enclosing paragraph, but they may insert sentences, clauses, or phrases within parentheses at any place in the sentence. Or they can insert a sentence between sentences. Such good results have come from

this exercise that I now give grades for it. It is excellent for teaching students to cut, for many imaginative students do too much digressive associating and end up with a "mound of junk" rather than caged digressions.

Part seven, "The Search," is an in-depth look at several scientific research projects that have spanned decades, a sobering reminder for the students that work, often drudging work, follows after the initial idea or inspiration. As the semester advances, their thoughts must surely return to this section of the film, for as one student said, "All we do is write and write and write some more. It gets boring correcting my own papers."

Part seven might suggest the research paper taught in the second semester classes. In the first semester, however, I do require some author research for the themes of interpretation. Less formal "research" techniques for writing are, of course, journal keeping and brainstorming. Brainstorming as a class on a non-word that the students agree on and then define or describe, with each student contributing some "information," teaches not only organization but a method of researching a topic as well. Brainstorming was taught to me; I teach it to each of my freshmen classes, using it for an in-class theme, but allowing complete out-of-class rewrites for any paper that is not "A" work. Herein lurks the drudgery that follows the inspiration.

Finally, part eight, the conclusion, answers the posed question "Why does man create?" with the simple "To say I AM." As beautifully imaginative as the rest of the film, the concluding section uses pictures of art treasures and artifacts of past and present cultures. Since I require my students to write about topics they have selected and for which they are to assume a rhetorical stance, the cumulative effect of *Why Man Creates* is very poignant. If they had not realized it before, they soon discover that they are writing "This is who I am." One older student observed with an amazed wonderment that a composition class requires a very personal relationship between students and teacher for the student exposes his very soul. For any student who discovers how to speak in his own voice, composition is a course in self-revelation.

The saying "A picture is worth a thousand words" holds more truth than ever before, for we are now working with a generation of students oriented to visual communication, being accustomed to seeking the television for both relaxation and information. Thus, the film, *Why Man Creates*, remains an invaluable source of reference for me throughout the semester.

JILL P. MAY

# Films for Children

Many teachers of the language arts wish to use films with their pupils. Since these teachers do not have media reviews and preview materials readily available, they find annotated lists helpful.

For several years I have been teaching "Media for Children," the required literature course for future elementary teachers and media specialists at Purdue University. I have compiled the following list of films in connection with this course.

These films have been reviewed in professional media journals and recommended for school or library use; most of them have been used with children in order to judge the films' appeals. My viewing of these films leads me to believe that they will be valuable in the language-arts classroom. All films suggested may be previewed before purchase.

*Arrow to the Sun*, 12 minutes, color, Texture Films, 1600 Broadway, New York, New York 10019, $165.00, grades 2-6. This striking film is based on American Acoma Indian mythology, and is a useful introduction to the subject of Pueblo Indian life. The film shows an Indian village, Indians working at traditional tasks, and young boys playing stick games. The illustrations are geometric, and reflect authentic Indian art interpretations of their life. Because the film is complex in theme and stark in presentation, it is best used after reading the Caldecott award book also created by McDermitt. Indian music dominates the sound track, with only the main character, an Indian lad, speaking his lines.

*Bighorn!*, 26 min., color, Stouffer Productions, Box 15057, Aspen, Colorado 81611, $350.00, grds. 2-high school. Bighorn sheep are beautifully photographed in the Rocky Mountains in this well-produced explanation of their life cycle and nature habitat. Because many other animals have been introduced through the informative narration and photography, it is an excellent film to use within nature and environmental units.

*The Case of the Elevator Duck*, 17 min., color, Learning Corporation of America, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019, $265.00, grds. preschool-6. This mystery is fun for all, whether they live in the inner city or not. Gilbert, the young Black who plays detective, is realistically played, and the duck he is helping is a natural. Although the film does show some of the negative sides of housing projects, the overall picture is a positive one, showing the Black ghetto family in a happy situation. Because the story is based on a book, the film could be used to encourage reading. But it would be equally useful in social studies or when discussing pets.

*Clever Hiko-Ichi, A Japanese Tale*, 12 min., color, Coronet, 65 East South Water Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601, $155.00, grds. preschool-4. The Japanese folktale of a young lad who uses logic to outwit a rival chieftain is retold with lively wooden puppetry, excellent background music, and good narration. The story is very useful in curriculum units concerning either Japanese culture or math. In the story, the young hero systematically wins battles by developing concepts of measurement and of gravity.

*Fiction Friction*, 18 min., color, Cellar Door Cinema, Drawer P, Osterville, Cape Cod, Massachusetts 02566, $275.00, all ages. *Fiction Friction* is a fun way of introducing the audience to the public library, its materials, and staff. Totally entertaining, the film was produced in a small library, using its staff and local children. The children are real rascals, and the antics depicted wild. This would be a great film to share with librarians and teachers since it captures the energy of normal children.

*The Happy Prince*, 25 min., color, Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, California 90406, $325.00, grds. 4-high school. *The Happy Prince* won the gold medal at the Atlanta International Film Festival and the silver plaque at the Chicago International Film Festival. It is a vividly animated reflection of an Oscar Wilde literary fairy tale. The music used, including a wonderful children's choir, is excellent. It draws the viewer into the story, and helps him to soar with the little swallow in the otherwise visual scenes. Because of Wilde's language and theme it is best used with older children or young people studying fiction styles.

*Hopscotch*, 12 min., color, Churchill Films, 662 North Robertson Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90069, $150.00, grds. K-4. Sound effects and simple animation are used to create the story of three children, two good friends and a third child, who would like to play with them. The production strives to lose all racial and sexual stereotypes—the two good friends are a purple girl (with black features) and a pink boy, while the new child is a green boy—in order to relate the message that it is most important to be oneself when seeking friends. It would easily lead into a discussion of shyness, materialism, and role playing.

*The Legend of John Henry*, 11 min., color, Pyramid, $160.00, grds. 4-junior high. This 1974 film won ten awards including a Best of the Year award from *Learning Magazine* in cooperation with the Educational Media Producers Council. By synchronating the animation with Roberta Flack's sung story, John Henry's hammer comes alive. It is the overall effect of sight and sound that makes the film an important medium. With middle grades it could be used to introduce the American hero tale or folk ballads. Older children would enjoy it as part of history or as a medium which recreates literature in a meaningful way.

*The Legend of Paul Bunyan*, 13 min., color, Pyramid, $180.00, grds. 4-junior high. The story of Paul Bunyan is a real yarn as told by a Scandinavian mountain man, and is much more lively than most folklore presentations. The animation and story will especially appeal to middle grade boys, but can be used with all children from the intermediate grades through junior high. It won the CINE Golden Eagle award.

*Me and You Kangaroo*, 19 min., color, Learning Corporation of America, $265.00, grds. 2-9. Joey, an orphaned kangaroo, is the real hero in this film. Set in Australia, this is the story of Joey's adoption by a young boy about ten years old. The companionship of boy and pet is stressed, and the problems that arise are realistic. Although Joey loves the boy, he is still a large wild animal unschooled in the ways of civilization. His sometimes rowdy behavior makes it necessary for the boy to set him free in the wilds of Australia. The film is beautifully photographed and is told mainly through scenes rather than dialogue. It could be used in a variety of ways: as a background to a study of Australia, as an example of the harm guns can do, and as a reminder that some wild animals were not really meant to be pets, but are happiest in their natural habitat. It is an exceptionally good film to use with older children since it easily can stimulate conversation on a variety of topics.

*The Mole and the Green Star*, 8 min., color, McGraw-Hill Films, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020, $115.00, grds. preschool-4. The mole and his problem of replacing a fallen star are captured with humor and love in this short film. The little mole, who may be seen in other McGraw-Hill films, is never given the power of speech. But his man-

nerisms and moods are so well portrayed in this animated film that the viewer sympathizes with his plight. The only drawback in the film is that the star looks more like a glowing ball than a part of the heavens. This non-narrated film was first produced in Czechoslovakia, and is a definite contrast to American popular animation. It would be a good film to use when discussing Czechoslovakia, spring cleaning, or friendship.

*On Your Way to School*, 8 min., color, McGraw-Hill, $125.00, grds. preschool-4. The theme of becoming aware of your own environment is excellently portrayed in this film by using the daily travels of a young girl walking her city route to school and taking note of her surroundings. The narration, singing, and art work are all done by children and are all earnest expressions of their feelings. Although the singing may seem a bit off key to adult ears, it will be enjoyed by children. A good film to use in art or social studies, as well as in urban schools.

*The Painting Ship*, 13 min., color, Weston Woods, Weston, Connecticut 06880, $120.00, grds. 4-junior high. This film is well worth the money since it can be used with a variety of children in a variety of subjects. Although its main focus is on the creative endeavors and self-expressions of a group of children, it also is a good introduction to Holland, and to the idea of a free school. The real scenes are excellently captured, including an old couple dancing in a picturesque park.

*Pulcinella*, 11 min., color, Connecticut Films, 6 Cobble Hill Road, Westport, Connecticut 06880, $155.00, grds. 1-4. This Italian film is a boldly animated non-narrated interpretation of the Italian Punch. Because of the bold color techniques and fight scenes, it may confuse the very young. It is an artistic combination of folklore, art, and classical music.

*Right Thumb, Left Thumb*, 9 min., color, Oxford Films, 1136 North Las Palmas Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90038, $125.00, grds. K-3. A somewhat unrealistic story of a small Spanish speaking boy who knows what corners to turn to go to the grocer, but cannot remember which direction to turn, is convincingly portrayed by the acting of the main character and his friend. The film is an excellent illustration of a child's ability to follow instructions, and of his sense of pride in independence. Because the story shows the inner city, it would be a valuable addition to most city systems.

*Santiago's Ark*, 47 min., color, Carousel Films, 1501 Broadway, New York, New York 10036, $565.00, grds. 3-9. If you're rich, here's the place to put your money! Produced in 1973, this is a great story of two boys and their desire to create something. The acting is realistic, and the Spanish Harlem scene well portrayed. Santiago is a typical boy who could live anywhere, but who lives in a ghetto. Because the people have a community spirit, the movie could be used to show similarities between inner city and suburban life. The film also would be useful when studying human relations, creative activities, and family life styles.

*The Selfish Giant*, 27 min., color, Pyramid, $325.00, grds. 4-high school. Oscar Wilde's literary fairy tale, *The Selfish Giant*, is beautifully retold in this animated version. Because the tale contains not only the moral lesson that we only gain a cold emptiness when we hoard, but also some religious implications of Christ's power and of life after death, it is a film best used with older children. It could be used not only in the school curriculum, but also with older people and with religious groups.

*Solo*, 15 min., color, Pyramid, $200.00, grds. 5-adult. *Solo* is a winner of 12 international awards including the CINE Golden Eagle. It is a breathtaking representation of the lonely ascent of a mountain climber. Actually it was filmed on 21 climbs in the United States and Canada, but flawless editing has created the effect of one long, vigorous climb followed by a joyous and speedy descent. There is no narration, only the sound of nature, the climber, and of

background music. But there is a definite plot and theme—man's desire to conquer nature without ruining its beauty.

**This Train*, 5 min., color, Perspective Films, 369 West Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610, $90.00, grds. 3-up. *This Train* is a classic film that shows a night train rolling down the tracks in its majestic but lonely trip to another place. *This Train* is also a civil rights song; it is hauntingly sung by Big Bill Broonzy for the film. The total effect is well worth showing; it is short and open ended enough to be viewed in several subject areas. Because of its theme it could best be used to discuss the freedom movement with older children. But it would be worthwhile to show when discussing train travel, the underground railroad, or folksongs.

**Thoroughbred*, 22 min., color, Pyramid, $300.00, grds. 4-10. *Thoroughbred* will be as useful 20 years from its release in 1974. Produced in Canada, it is the non-narrated story of a race horse from birth until his first race. The gay banjo music and male humming aid beautiful shots of a young colt growing up. The auction sequence should be extremely interesting since few children ever attend stock auctions. The total film would be useful when discussing horses, spectator sports, or nature. Because no story is told it would be valuable to use as a stimulus to a creative writing assignment.

*Three Little Rabbits*, 6 min., color, Learning Corporation of America, $120.00, grds. K-4. Three little rabbits tell a magpie they plan to eat wolf meat and start a forest uproar in this clever and colorful animated film. The film shows how gossip grows since each character's description of the rabbits becomes more bizarre. It is an entertaining short film that will appeal to very young children, and could be used to suggest that events are not always as frightening as we imagine them to be. It is also a good modern tall tale which could be shared in a language arts session.

*The Three Robbers*, 6 min., color, Weston Woods, $120.00, grds. K-6. What fun! *The Three Robbers* is a non-narrated animated version true to the picture book by Tomi Ungerer. The sound is all done with humorous sound effects created by a male voice. Younger children will enjoy this as an introduction to Ungerer's picture books. Older children will see the slapstick humor in the combination of sound effects and cartoon-like animation.

***The Velveteen Rabbit***, 19 min., color, LSB Production, 1310 Monaco Drive, Pacific Palisades, California 90272, $295.00, grds. K-4. A delightful rendition of a sentimental literary fairy tale, this film creates a real mood. *The Velveteen Rabbit*'s book format is old fashioned and uninteresting. In contrast, the film carefully reproduced the text through live action and well-done narration. The photography and dialogue are excellent. Overall, the filmed version is enchanting to young children. While the nursery fairy may be a bit much for adults, she is as real to children watching as is the Velveteen Rabbit. It can best be used to introduce the literary fairy tale, or to begin discussion of friendship and of reality.

*Zlateh the Goat*, 20 min., color, Weston Woods, $325.00, grds. 4-9. *Zlateh the Goat* is a well-produced live action film which depicts one of Isaac Singer's excellent Jewish folktales. The goat seems to be a natural actor, and the young boy is realistically portrayed. Although the story moves slowly at times, it will appeal to older children and is a good introduction to European folklore.

*NOTE: Outstanding—should not date—good curriculum uses.

KEN DONELSON

# A BASIC LIBRARY OF SHORT FILMS: 50 Suggested Titles

I suppose the two most obvious and frequent questions asked about using short films in English classes are (1) why use films at all? and (2) how do you use films?

Why use films? Maybe because they are there, maybe because short films really can turn kids on (yes, I know that some films won't, especially things like *Oliver Wendell Holmes Country* and *Outlining Will Make You a Better Writer* and *Our Friend, The Introductory Adverbial Clause* or *A Trip Through Punctuation Land*—things like that bore kids, but films aren't all like that), maybe because films are great levelers and slow kids can often compete successfully with bright kids when films are viewed and discussed, maybe because films are great for initiating discussions, maybe because films introduce life and reality and controversy into classrooms, maybe because—because—and more becauses. Films are ways of looking, of seeing, of noticing, of entering, of becoming. Films offer one way of entering and accepting illusions, and illusions sometimes can lead to truths greater than anything accessible through mere facts. The world of films is the world created by the "see-er" in which he becomes part of the seen; a world of two-dimensions which the viewer can enter with his/her four-dimension mind. Maybe most important of all, films are fun, they are enjoyable, and isn't that the major reason we like to read books or do almost anything, because we get pleasure of many different kinds and degrees through the mental and emotional stimulation of something that deeply involves us?

How do we use films? Well, how does anyone use a poem? Or a tape recording? Or a short story? Or a newspaper? Or anything at all? How do we use anything that tells about man's stupidity and nobility and cupidity and fallibility and gullibility? We begin by finding out what the thing is (the kind of film, the idea or thesis or point or truths or ambiguities it contains, the problems we'll face in wrestling with it in class) and then we'll try to find some context for using it, assuming we like it enough ourselves to want to devote time to it. Films are like any other form; they can be used in and of themselves, as parts of a unit, as some facet or other of an elective, of explications or amplifications of some experience we'd like our students to have. In short, they are as useful as any other art form, no more, no less, limited in value and use only as far as the teacher is limited in imagination and knowledge of teaching and students. Films can be used to teach literature or composition or visual literacy. The boundary, and the only boundary, of film teaching is the teacher's scope and innovation and imagination.

I've been teaching a course in short films and the teaching of English at Arizona State University for four years, and during that time my class and I

have watched and criticized about 600 films. Additionally, I must have seen at least 2,000 more films during those four years, both to help me to select new films for the summer class and to allow me to review films for a couple of journals. Below, I offer what I think are the basic 50 films for any film cooperative or school district, films of particular value to English teachers. I'm aware that my choices are highly subjective (so is any list of anything recommended to anyone), but I do believe that English teachers ought to know these films. To know them, I believe, is to realize the values of short films and to recognize the potential of short films for English classes.

*After the First*, 14 minutes, color, Franciscan Communications Center, rental $15.00. A young boy gets a shotgun, his first, for his twelfth birthday, and he and his father set off on the first day of rabbit hunting. The boy learns that taking the life of an animal is a simple but painful event.

*Ark*, 20 min., color, Arthur Barr Productions, rental $20.00. Set in the near future, the film shows an Earth corrupted and contaminated by air pollution. A man establishes an ark, a sanctuary, for animals and birds and himself, but he learns that other men will not tolerate a safety island that keeps other things in but themselves out. A controversial and biting film.

*Ballet Adagio*, 10 min., color, Pyramid Films, rental $15.00. A Norman McLaren film (and that's surely proof of quality) with two ballet dancers exalting life. A gorgeous film.

*The Bass Fiddle*, 28 min., black and white, Contemporary Films, rental $20.00. The Chekhov short story about a musician and a lady who lose their clothes and wander around looking for clothing. A very funny and quite unsalacious film.

*Because, That's Why*, 17 min., b&w, Film Images, rental $15.00. Some frustrated hunters go off for a day away from an even more frustrating office life and bag no game at all, just a runaway car. Something of a comedy of the absurd and a nice satire on contemporary life.

*Blake*, 19 min., color, Contemporary, rental $25.00. Blake is very much an individualist, flying all over Canada in his primitive plane, and doing whatever pleases him. A story about a character with character.

*Bolero*, 27 min., color, Pyramid, rental $25.00. An exciting reading of Ravel's music by Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic is preceded by interviews with some of the musicians. A lovely film. Not your too-usual, artsy-craftsy-junky stuff.

*A Chairy Tale*, 10 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $10.00. A man attempts to sit on a chair and the chair refuses to be so used. A simple and very funny premise turns into a truly great film about whatever you want to make of it—a battle between the sexes, the problems of communication, etc.

*The Chicken*, 15 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $15.00. A French family selects a bird for Sunday dinner, the son wants to keep the rooster as a pet, and he tries to convince his father that the rooster is really a chicken and thereby an egg-layer and therefore an economic worthwhile object. Very funny, touching, and truly warm film.

*The Dawn Horse*, 18 min., color, Stanton Films, rental unknown. A mythical and mystical film about Indians and their beliefs and practices and religions. Beautifully photographed and deeply moving.

*Death of a Peasant*, 10 min., color, Mass Media Associates, rental $15.00. During World War II, a group of peasants are rounded up for execution. One man breaks away from the group and flees. He ties a rope around his neck, attaches it to a wagon, and as the soldiers come near, frightens the horses and the wagon takes off, strangling him to death. A film about man's right to his own free will and to choose his own style of death.

*Experiments in Motion Graphics*, 13 min., color, Pyramid, rental $15.00. John Whitney, maker of many computer generated films, explains how and why he uses the computer to make his experimental works. I thought this was one of the most fascinating films I'd ever seen when I first watched it. Repeated viewings have only confirmed that opinion.

*The Fat and the Lean*, 15 min., b&w, Pyramid, rental $18.00. A grossly fat man owns controls a young slave. He controls the youth so thoroughly that it is only rarely that the young man is able to do anything he wants. When the slave has the chance to break away to total freedom, he comes back, unable to accept or work within the confines of freedom. An ambiguous early short film of Roman Polanski worth seeing and talking about.

*The Father*, 28 min., b&w, New Line Cinema, rental $35.00. A filming of Chekhov's short story variously translated as "Grief" or "The Lament" about a father who is unable to find anyone who will listen to the story of his son's death. Brilliantly acted by Burgess Meredith.

*Frank Film*, 9 min., color, Pyramid, rental $15.00. Frank Mouris' autobiographical film spewing images and sounds at the viewer. An Academy Award winner, deservedly so, that will intrigue viewers.

*Gallery*, 6 min., color, Pyramid, rental $10.00. A history of something like 3,000 years of art but very unpretentious and engaging.

*The Hangman*, 12 min., color, Contemporary, rental $15.00. A reading of Maurice Ogden's didactic poem about a hangman coming to town and his hanging of individuals is accompanied by a series of macabre shots done in somber colors. Some students will think the poem is so preachy but others will become involved.

*Help! My Snowman's Burning Down*, 10 min., color, Contemporary, rental $10.00. A story of a modern Everyman. Living in a bathtub on a pier, he finds himself confronted with every bewildering facet of the modern world. An absurdist film which will confuse some students, mystify others, and delight a few.

*The House*, 32 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $30.00. We see the story of a house and its inhabitants from about 1910 until about 1945, from the construction to its demolition. A tale not chronologically told but broken into small pieces and presented to us in such a way that we are asked to construct the entire story.

*Joseph Schultz*, 13 min., color, Wombat Productions, rental unknown. A German soldier, circa World War II, finds that he can kill in battle, but he cannot kill a group of hostages, and he joins them and dies. A true episode of courage.

*Love Me, Love Me, Love Me*, 8 min., color, Contemporary, rental $12.50. A cartoon about Squidgy Bod, lovable and inept, and Thermus Fortitude, unloved and able. Thermus, hating his condition, takes lessons on how to be loved with hilarious results. A delightful moral ending that mocks every silly moral ever written.

*Matrix*, 6 min., color, Pyramid, rental $10.00. The best of the computer films with graceful squares curving and dancing their way through space. Cerebral more than emotional but beautiful.

*Munro*, 9 min., color, Rembrandt Films, rental $12.50. An Academy Award winner of several years' back by Jules Feiffer about a four-year-old boy who is drafted into the army by accident and then is unable to get out because army regulations prove that a four-year-old could not have been drafted in the first place. Wonderful satire with many nasty digs at the army and bureaucracies in general.

*Nahanni*, 18 min., color, Contemporary, rental $15.00. Albert Faille, age 73, sets out on his eighth trip up the Canadian Nahanni River searching for the gold reputedly to be found at the headwaters. Based on truth, a compelling picture of man's drive to leave a mark of himself on the world.

*Neighbors*, 9 min., color, Contemporary, rental $12.50. A Norman McLaren classic about two neighbors who watch a flower bloom on the dividing line between the properties. At first admiring the flower and then increasingly eager to possess the flower, the two men eventually war and kill each other. A frightening indictment of greed and power.

*Night and Fog*, 31 min., color and b&w, Contemporary, rental $30.00. The classic Alain Resnais film about German concentration camps and the horrors they wreaked and the dehumanizing impact they had on prisoners. Strong fare, but we all need periodically to be reminded of the horrors that governments can cause in the name of national ideals.

*Note from Above*, 2 min., color, Mass Media, rental $10.00. A series of notes, actually the Commandments, waft from above to zealous believers below. The next to the last message reads, "Thou Shalt Kill." There is no one left to receive the last message. "Last note should be Thou Shalt *Not* Kill. Sorry, my mistake." A satire on conformity and zealousness.

*N.Y., N.Y.*, 16 min., color, Pyramid, rental $20.00. Francis Thompson's effort to get at the essence of New York City through the use of different lenses and all sorts of distorted shots. Visually stunning and imaginative.

*An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, 27 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $20.00. The classic Ambrose Bierce short story about the hanging of a spy during the Civil War has been made into one of the two or three classic short films. Overused and likely abused in too many English classes, the film still holds up very well.

*One Eyed Men Are Kings*, 15 min., color, Contemporary, rental $25.00. A very recent Academy Award winner, this is about a Frenchman, mistreated by his aged mother, hated by her dog, and abused or ignored by almost everyone else. Discovering that the world honors blind people, the man puts on dark glasses and uses his mother's dog as his "seeing-eye dog." Ultimately, he's exposed, but what a wonderful life he has for a few days. One of the funniest films, much like Chaplin, I've seen in years.

*Pas de Deux*, 14 min., b&w, Learning Corporation of America, rental $25.00. Another Norman McLaren film, this a stroboscopic study of movement and light and shadow with two ballet dancers. Incredibly beautiful. My favorite short film.

*The Question*, 10 min., color, Contemporary, rental $12.50. A trifle simplistic but still charming cartoon about a little man who suddenly finds a large question mark hovering over his head. Questioning what the question is (or means) he goes to scientists, churchmen, military leaders, psychiatrists, but no one can help, no one that is until a young lady appears on the scene.

*The Red Balloon*, 34 min., color, Audio Brandon, rental $27.50. The lovely and religious and mystical account of a young French boy who befriends a lonely red balloon. The balloon (and the boy) are envied by other boys who finally kill the balloon, and then a miracle takes place. Sounds a little fey, but I have yet to have anyone, teacher or student, who didn't like it.

*Rodeo*, 20 min., color, Contemporary, rental $25.00. I do not like rodeos and when I previewed this film quite a few years back I expected to dislike the film. Not so. It's a beautiful and well-executed study of rodeo riders and their spills and color and rodeo clowns and the indifference of the animals. The long shots and the slow motion, nearly freeze shots, of one lonely rodeo rider pitted against a Brahma bull are magnificent.

*The Running, Jumping, and Standing Still Film*, 11 min., b&w, Pyramid, rental $15.00. The reader ought to be warned about this one. I love it. My students almost universally hate it. If you liked the old English radio show, "The Goon Show," or "Monty Python's Flying Circus," there's a chance you'll like this Peter Sellers' film. If you don't, you won't.

*The Shepherd*, 7 min., color, Macmillan, rental $10.00. A simple shepherd wanders around the big city trying to find work. Failing, he hears a mighty voice from overhead urging him to go into some other work, so he answers the call of destiny and becomes a blacksmith. The cartoon works on several levels, as an attack on guidance counselors, as an indictment of cliches and people who listen to cliches, and as a commentary on modern man and city life.

*The Shooting Gallery*, 6 min., color, SIM Films, rental $7.00. A soldier fires away at targets in a shooting gallery. Once hit, the people on the target mechanically act out jerky motions. Suddenly, a new target is hit, but instead of acting out their mechanical roles, two lovers break away from the target and temporarily gain independence until the soldier grabs them, smashes them flat, and puts them back in place doomed to live out their proper roles as targets. Excellent indictment of mechanized life and a totalitarian society.

*Silences*, 12 min., color, Contemporary, rental $15.00. Two peasants ransacking German soldiers' bodies for clothing, find one soldier still alive. Taking him to safety, they run into their own partisan forces, and one runs off while the other continues to help the German. Then, as he nears home, the peasant sees that his village has been destroyed by Germans, and blindly he kills the man whose life he had been saving. Savage, bitter, and true picture of the horror of war and what it can do to the best of us.

*The Sort*, 10 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $12.50. A farm couple wait for the visit of their son from the city. When he returns, they discover the outside world has made him a man they can hardly recognize. Stark cartooning is extremely effective.

*Sticky My Fingers, Fleet My Feet*, 24 min., color, Time-Life Films, rental $25.00. A Saturday afternoon touch-football player joins his middle-aged friends in Central Park for another game. The joy of conquest soon ends when a 14-year-old boy joins them and proves far and away the best player. Comedy at its best, satirical, sad commentary on man's values and aims, effective camera work, delightful.

*Street Musique*, 9 min., color, Learning Corporation of America, rental $15.00. Ryan Larkin's animations are a series of variations on three street musicians shown early in the film. Starting with simple line drawings, Larkin develops increasingly colorful and complex paintings.

*The Stringbean*, 17 min., color and b&w, Contemporary, rental $17.50. Already a classic among short films, this is the story of a very old and lonely French seamstress who plants a stringbean, nurtures it, and plants it in a large flowerbed in a city park, only to see workmen rip it up. A story of loneliness and fortitude and beauty.

*Syrinx* and *Cityscape*, 4 min., b&w, Learning Corporation of America, rental $10.00. Two short films (on the same reel) by Ryan Larkin, the first the ancient Greek myth. Both are series of charcoal drawings rapidly and lovingly put together so they look like moving drawings. Two of the finest of short films.

*Time Piece*, 8 min., color, Contemporary, rental $17.50. A man lies in a hospital thinking back, and we see, in a series of absurdist flashbacks, who and what and why he was and how he got where he did. Wild and wacky and wonderful to talk about.

*Toys*, 7 min., color, Contemporary, rental $15.00. A group of children look at a wonderful assortment of toys. Suddenly, the children stop moving and the toys move, all toys of war. Soldiers fight, planes drop bombs, napalm hits a soldier and he burns, and others die. A quiet film becomes a parable of war and death and horror. One of many great and disturbing and moving short films from the Film Board of Canada.

*Two Men and a Wardrobe*, 15 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $25.00. A Roman Polanski short about two men who unexpectedly rise from the sea carrying a wardrobe chest. Moving through town, they suffer cruelty and perverseness and pain and scorn, parallel to the treatment accorded men by other men. A nice and distressing parable.

*Very Nice, Very Nice*, 7 min., b&w, Contemporary, rental $10.00. Arthur Lipsett's commentary on loneliness and misery and death today done through a series of still pictures and an often ironic commentary.

*The Violinist*, 8 min., color, Learning Corporation of America, rental $10.00. Ernest Pintoff's delightful satire on art through suffering. Harry loves to play his violin, but he plays, as one character says, "awful." So Harry goes to a master violinist who urges him to suffer to produce beautiful music, and Harry does suffer. He plays beautifully, only he's also miserable. Voices by Carl Reiner.

*The Wall*, 4 min., color, Contemporary, rental $12.50. A man sits by an impenetrable wall waiting for something or someone. Then another man comes by and hurls himself repeatedly at the wall and finally breaks through at the cost of his own life. Then the first man, the people-user, doffs his hat in pity, walks through, finds another wall, and sits again, waiting for yet another person to use.

*Why Man Creates*, 25 min., color, Pyramid, rental $20.00. A classic of short films, this was originally produced by Kaiser Aluminum. There have been plenty of imitators, but no film has so well demonstrated man's incredible desire to create, to find out, to question, to wonder, to doubt. Nor has any film I know so well illustrated man's incredible intellectual tenacity. This film ought to make us proud of ourselves. We have much to worry about, much to sorrow about—this film gives us reason to recognize that man is not completely or eternally hopeless.

SAUL ROSENTHAL

# TELETEACH AND THE ENGLISH CLASS: An Interview with Lewis Paige Sego

Lewis Paige Sego, an assistant professor of English at Indiana State University, holds a Ph.D. in instructional systems technology and English. He took his period courses and languages for a doctoral major in English literature at the University of Tennessee and his courses in instructional systems technology and educational psychology at Indiana University, where his degree was awarded in 1974. He has published articles of literary criticism, original poems, and a verse translation of Goethe's "Der Elfkonig," as well as reviews in *College Composition and Communication*. His double major has placed him in a unique position to work both as scholar and technician.

**ROSENTHAL:** Dr. Sego, you recently completed an educational videotape on Nathaniel Hawthorne. Did you have the idea of a series at that time?

**SEGO:** When I first began, I was thinking of putting together a single television program on Hawthorne, more of a biographical and literary survey than anything more serious. But after returning from my visit to the areas of Massachusetts where Hawthorne lived, and after working with the material I've gathered, including many slides, I decided, instead of doing that one program, what I'd like to do was to write a more serious paper and see if I couldn't use the medium of television. Since videotape in color was available on campus, I wanted to use that medium as a way of enhancing the presentation of the paper. I didn't know of anyone who'd done anything quite like that before. In fact, one of the discouraging things about videotape programming that comes from our universities is that it's off the cuff, not always prepared, and very seldom scripted. So this was a departure for me to do a scripted television program. One of the things that thrust me into doing such a program was the recent IHETS (Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System) convention that was televised on a statewide network in October of 1975. During that time I began to see the possibilities for developing a solid set of instructional modules in American literature maybe featuring some of the major American authors and using the resources of some of our top scholars in the state. Naturally it seemed we'd have to start with something concrete. And though I wasn't setting myself up as a top scholar, I thought that I could at least chip away at the rock and set some trends, and maybe those who were more interested in American literature than I (my dissertation was on Browning, not Hawthorne) could contribute some of their knowledge to scripting a module on an American author. Possibly we could put together a whole set of these 30-minute units that could be arranged in many different ways, used collectively or individually in classes, maybe even in some statewide course offerings for television. I suspect the best comparison would be the extended services program that allows students to take courses by correspondence.

Television might be able to provide an extended service. By beaming some of these programs to remote areas over the IHETS network, by using the talk-back capabilities of the IHETS system, and by administering televised tests on the material, departments of English might be able to offer some courses both substantive and rigorous without requiring the students to come to the campus. This prospect contributed to my interest in the production of tapes.

**ROSENTHAL:** What has developed with this project recently?

**SEGO:** I just received word from the IHETS office that the Program Development Committee has given tentative approval for the formation of a Conference Group to set the statewide project into motion.

**ROSENTHAL:** I gather the nature of the project very much hinges on the amount of funding.

**SEGO:** Yes, you find that you have to make compromises between the ideal and what you can afford. Other compromises result from tailoring the material to fit the 30-minute time block and the nature of the audience. The audience won't consist of scholars, although it may contain generally older adults than the usual college class.

**ROSENTHAL:** What specific plan have you decided on—such as number of modules?

**SEGO:** Right now my hope is that we can first solicit contributions from literary scholars across the state. We'll find out how many scholars have specific interests in American literature. We should have in Indiana enough scholars to form a nucleus, at least, to start building ten or fifteen 30-minute modules, each based on a different American author. Then, we could apportion another ten or fifteen studies to those professing interest in contributing to the series of modules.

**ROSENTHAL:** It could be flexible, so that if you build a small library, a teacher could select—

**SEGO:** From maybe, later, as many as 30 different modules.

**ROSENTHAL:** So it could be used as a course or a supplement?

**SEGO:** Enrichment for courses already existing or it could be used as a series telecast over PBS. It's the kind of thing that could command some widespread interest beyond the academic.

**ROSENTHAL:** Would parts be ready during the Bicentennial year? PBS might be interested if they are.

**SEGO:** It would be a long-range project. I can see it as being ready by 1977 possibly. That is more realistic. The 30-minute Hawthorne program that we just finished videotaping consisted of seven video recordings—that is, I attempted the videotaping seven times. And the time that went into writing, revising, typing it for the different sets, typing portions of it to be placed inside books or mock-up newspapers or letters, and typing the entire script in a large font for the teleprompter (this allowed me to look at the camera except when I was supposed to be reading from a book)—all those little things that you would think wouldn't take long caused the preparation time to grow into 75 hours.

**ROSENTHAL:** How long was it spread out in terms of weeks or months?

**SEGO:** I did the photography a year ago last summer, then worked on the script in the fall, revised it in the spring and tested it in the summer, and began to shoot some of the other video materials and assemble the props and design the set and pull all the details together this fall. Then from the time I began videotaping until it was in the final form, it took almost an uninterrupted two and a half weeks.

**ROSENTHAL:** What plans do you have for the American literature series that might be of interest to those who wish to participate?

**SEGO:** One of the first plans is to encourage the contributors to look over their own interests to see what they'd be willing to do, as I did for the Hawthorne videotape, so that instead of having one single department dictate what should be done, we would allow considerable autonomy. Of course, some of the scholars who don't have closed circuit facilities on their campuses might like to contact us or another university having such facilities where they can arrange to produce their modules. But I would urge contributers simply to let us know what they would like to do and how they would like to do it and see if we can't open up a wide variety of approaches so that there wouldn't be that monotonous stamp of precedent on each module. As soon as we see what kind of contributions are in the offing, we might form some more definitive statements. We might see some kind of organizational scheme emerging. If we do have the expected response, I can envision a timetable with realistic completion dates.

**ROSENTHAL:** It's a most ambitious project.

**SEGO:** Many of our scholars may not realize that this is a new twentieth century way of publishing a work, a way that was not available when many of our graduate schools began their programs and began to teach us how to publish. This is a method that has just come up in the last few years and is offering an opportunity for scholarship to be disseminated to many who would have never attended a convention of the Modern Language Association or a meeting of the Indiana Council of Teachers of English.

**ROSENTHAL:** That is not crass materialism but realistic motivation.

**SEGO:** They might not be quite as reluctant to pour the amount of energy into the product that it would require. But I think there are several motivations. The primary one is that we can extend our influence and extend our values to many people we have never reached with scholarly papers. That is what I see as the primary motivation. A secondary one is being able to share our ideas with members of other institutions and in this manner develop a wide interchange of scholarship quite beyond the boundaries of Indiana. We might be able to attract students from other states to ours as a result of their interest in what we were doing after seeing these tapes on PBS or other outlets. I am not suggesting that we proselytize, but there is a definite advantage in letting other scholars and student bodies know what our scholars are doing.

**ROSENTHAL:** How does our IHETS network compare with other states?

**SEGO:** This system is one of two in the entire United States. I understand that the state of Virginia has a television communications network among the universities, but Indiana has pioneered in this field and has the finest potential. With our SUVON telephonic network interfacing with our television network we are now capable of a consortium never before possible in the history of academe.

**ROSENTHAL:** This suggests quite a revolution is in the making. . . .

**SEGO:** And we can be part of it—and *are* part of it. It seems that Indiana is especially responsible for giving some of our talents and techniques to universities and colleges in other states just by the sheer fact that we have capabilities that they don't have.

**ROSENTHAL:** They may be watching us very closely.

**SEGO:** Yes, to see the quality we produce as well as the way we produce.

**ROSENTHAL:** This, I suppose, has its dangers. When you're in the vanguard you tend to make mistakes.

**SEGO:** Undoubtedly we will, but it will be a means of growth.

**ROSENTHAL:** I think this leads us into the philosophical question of visual and auditory education. There is a lot of resistance to it among English and other departments. Some feel it's really heretical . . . that in a sense we're selling out.

**SEGO:** I think that one thing we might do to counteract the resistance is to work with the more scholarly materials that until now have not been made the basis for instructional television. Most of us have seen very little quality programming outside of the film industry where millions of dollars have gone into producing outstanding dramas. In the case of the Hallmark Hall of Fame, for example, the quality has been maintained by enormous sums for a single evening's performance. We can't command those sums. We don't have the financial power to hire actors for long hours and technical crews, lighting and makeup crews, set designers, etc., that are required for a huge commercial undertaking.

**ROSENTHAL:** Like the America series, the Ascent of Man, the Benjamin Franklin biography. . . .

**SEGO:** These will be some of the likely comparisons that our colleagues will make. They will contrast them with educational productions and find the educational productions coming up short. Maybe our job is not to imitate but to do what we can do best. That is where the better scripting becomes our hallmark of fame.

**ROSENTHAL:** This is a voyage of discovery. We must discover what is uniquely our thing.

**SEGO:** It may be that if we can project this concept into the discussion of our colleagues when they are looking askance at the audiovisual encroachments, as they may view them, into the field of literature, we may be able to help them see that this is a way of moving a generation of students

reared by television into the pages of the books that we love and that they haven't yet learned to love.

**ROSENTHAL:** This is a subversive ruse that I have always liked. Rather than collapse in despair before a popular medium, it could be a way of winning students to deeper studies.

**SEGO:** In a way education *is* a subversive activity. We set out as our design to alter the interests, the loves, the values of our students, with, hopefully, the greatest of benevolence.

**ROSENTHAL:** Much of the criticism of today is that we might be contributing to the new illiteracy by the use of television and the film. You mentioned that we might win converts to reading. How do you think we could effectuate this?

**SEGO:** The most optimistic view that I can take is that we may, through quotations of passages, even illuminating them on the screen, letting the actual words stand out in full screen sequences, enable those who might be poor readers to bring something to the text that we have not been able to bring to the text when we have made a simple assignment and sent them to the library with it, to dig it out at their own level of reading ability. It seems to me that in an unobtrusive way we can become readers for them and let their eyes follow our voices and learn to read with a depth and an appreciation as a result of our commentary that they wouldn't have if sent to read a text assignment with a set of printed instructions. It seems that the generation coming along now responds favorably to classroom reading and explication. I have had any number of students tell me that they most enjoyed those classes in which poems are read and explicated on the spot. I think this is where we are likely to produce a sense of enjoyment and excitation for the printed word.

**ROSENTHAL:** I think that students are disenchanted with reading because so many books use small print. The young people of today, as a result of advertisements and the various media, are oriented in terms of stronger stimulation. Most paperbacks have very small print, and they find this tiring. . . .

**SEGO:** And even painful sometimes. . . .

**ROSENTHAL:** Sometimes I feel that if we could have reading machines in every home, the same way we have television sets, we might get more people interested in reading. But as you suggest, the modules can subtly bring in reading matter so that—

**SEGO:** I am certainly not suggesting that the modules we plan to produce are going to be totally graphic and dramatic, but, as was true in the videotape that we just made on Hawthorne, much of what is of substance has been the test of Hawthorne's own works, his letters, and portions of his journals. These have been enlarged so the viewer can see the words on the screen, and we did this by means of still photography, using a 35mm camera and shooting the actual pages of text, coming in on some very close-up shots. In fact, some were so close up that in a single frame we couldn't even see across the page but were illuminating key phrases or key sentences, to form the basis for commentary.

**ROSENTHAL:** The focus, again, is basically educational. . . .

**SEGO:** And the beauty of it is we can control the focus, both the mental and the visual focus, with this medium. We can force the student to see those portions of a text that we consider central to the author's philosophy or idea; and we can, by juxtaposing various works and portions of works, create impressions that are manipulated intentionally for instructional purposes.

**ROSENTHAL:** I often think about McLuhan's statement about the age of the book being dead. This has always deeply disturbed me.

**SEGO:** If I agreed with him I should be disturbed. But I feel that his effort was possibly to use hyperbole to get our attention. His entire book, *The Medium is the Message*, is perhaps a hyperbole. I am convinced that if during the Middle Ages the manuscript was not dead and that if many manuscripts including the works of Aristotle and Lucian, could be preserved by the laborious process of copying, handcopying, that is, then in the age of print we shall not see the death of the book. There will always be lovers of literature to see to it that the book will not die. It may die as a fad, if that's what it has been, but there will still be lovers of literature, possibly *more* lovers of literature if we can communicate the basis of our love to those who have not fallen in love with it.

**ROSENTHAL:** This rests on a faith that reading is still worthwhile and that it has advantages over the competing media.

**SEGO:** The process of reading plays more on the richness of the imagination because of its symbolic communication with the mind than does any other medium. The auditory medium, by its inflections and tonalities, controls the impressions to a much greater extent than the printed word where intonations and inflections can be imagined in keeping with what one is disposed to see and hear in the printed word. I think, by the same token, those imaginary visions that a work stimulates are much richer for not having the limitations of focal depth, depth of field, or the limits of sets, lighting, makeup, etc. The power of the imagination in a single line of print can move us in one sweeping jump from the planet earth to a planet unknown and far beyond the solar system.

**ROSENTHAL:** Well said. Of course, there are so many other advantages. The experience of poetry, for example, the subtlety and complexity of thought . . . .

**SEGO:** And the ability of poetry to capture the feeling of an emotion experienced by generations countless years in the past and to communicate that feeling to a generation that may have experienced something akin to it, offers, again, evidence of the superiority of the printed word.

**ROSENTHAL:** I think there's much wisdom, as well as emotional satisfaction, that can only be derived from the literary heritage. This is one reason why so many educators are scared about the new illiteracy. The young people seem to be losing so many values. . . .

**SEGO:** Values that have been time-tested, values that we hold not simply because they are old but because they have proven themselves again and again. It's this that the oral culture and audiovisual media cannot

transmit. These media can certainly transmit something, something that may, in the future, show to those generations how we tended to follow fads, if nothing else. But certainly the power of the word which is recorded most durably in the print seems undeniably sufficient to justify its own perpetuity.

**ROSENTHAL:** I think that the alarm over the new illiteracy is so great that the educators in the lower grades are beginning to do something about it. I've spoken with elementary school educators who are trying new attacks, such as having reading hours for the entire school. I'm wondering if you think that the teleteach can be helpful in this respect.

**SEGO:** I see the prospects of teleteach to be really excellent for accomplishing some of the objectives of elementary teachers. *Newsweek's* recent cover story, "Why Johnny Can't Write," is speaking to these new objectives and is suggesting by its very prominence that we are going to be challenged to use whatever media will bring the younger generation to coordinate reading and writing on a much more strenuous level of activity than in the past. We've given the impression that reading and writing can be easy and always fun. I think that anyone who has done any serious writing or any serious reading has come to places in those activities when it was difficult to pursue the paragraph, when it was difficult to plow through a work of fiction, when it was difficult to ponder a poem and the allusions within it and the concepts underlying it. It also seems to me that the opportunities of teleteach arise primarily from the simple expedient that the child of today is not afraid of television and is not particularly in love with television as a technical miracle. He doesn't have the awe of it that maybe our own generation has. But rather it's just there, and like paper and pencil it can be used as a source of information, like a book, a book of pictures or a book of print. So I think that we have to look upon the opportunity of teleteach with that same openmindedness that we would now take toward the illustration of a book.

**ROSENTHAL:** A fitting—and graphic—analogy to conclude with. Thank you.

## Poems

### LEAKING PEN

Pen
Broken, bleeding
Resisting my hand
As I try to
Heal.

### AIR POLLUTION

Asthmatic city sky,
Wheezing and coughing up
Smoke and soot into
The red running eyes of
The city.

### TIME

All I see,
When I look at Time,
Is the guilt of the Past,
The fears of the Future,
And the limits of the Present.

### INDIFFERENCE

Greetings, former friend.
I would like
for you
to know
that
the wound you put
in my solid shell
of indifference,
that little
tiny prick
you made with
your pin of
brief interest
and artificial concern,
has healed quite
completely.
Don't try to penetrate
my shell
ever
again.

### OFFERING

I don't want a close-cropped hedge.
I have all the forests.
I don't want neon lights.
I have the sun and the stars.
I don't want pre-printed cards.
I have my own words.
I don't want glossy containers.
I have more love than any box can hold.
Now I offer my words and my love
To you.

## MODERN LOVE SONG

Come with me to the roof of the factory
Where we can watch a tree die.
Hurry up so we can see the UFO's glow
Through the smog in the sky.
Hold my gloved hand as we observe the land
Burning and lost in smoke.
Let's watch the cement trucks run to the sea
Leaving highways as they go.
Technology's growing only too slow
To suit my modern soul.
Let's burn some trash and view the ash
Floating past what we stole
From the sun, which we won't return
For we'll get no deposit back.
We'll waste the earth away as we play
On a new smoke-stack.

## THE OTHERS

Yes, I know them.
They call themselves caring
and they ignore me.
They call themselves democratic
and they rule over me.
They call themselves fair
and they hate me.
They call themselves free
and they restrict me.
They call themselves gentle
and they beat me.
They call themselves clean
and they make me dirty.
They call themselves sincere.
I call them hypocrites.

## NCTE Resolution on Promoting Media Literacy

Members of the National Council of Teachers of English passed the following resolution at the 1975 Convention in San Diego (November 27-29):

**On Promoting Media Literacy**

BACKGROUND: Both the NCTE Committee on Public Doublespeak and the CEE (Conference on English Education) Committee on Teacher Training in the Nonprint Media advocate the preparation of students in a new literacy. This new literacy requires that individuals exercise critical abilities in reading, listening, viewing, and thinking in order to cope with the persuasive techniques found in political statements, advertising, entertainment, and news. Be it therefore

RESOLVED that NCTE, through its publications and its affiliates, continue to support curriculum changes designed to promote sophisticated media awareness at the elementary, secondary, and college levels; and, to this end, that NCTE create a new committee composed of no more than six members from the NCTE Committee on Public Doublespeak and the CEE Committee on Teacher Training in the Nonprint Media, which will prepare a collection of materials not later than November 1976. And be it further

RESOLVED that NCTE continue to encourage teacher education programs which will enable teachers to promote media literacy in students. And be it finally

RESOLVED that NCTE cooperate with organizations and individuals representing teachers of journalism, the social sciences, and speech communication to promote the understanding and develop the insights students need to evaluate critically the messages disseminated by the mass media.

## CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

*Indiana English Journal* is seeking manuscripts of interest to elementary, secondary, and university teachers for the following thematic issues:

Summer 1976: Oral Interpretation and Drama in the English and Language Arts Classroom. Deadline for receipt of manuscripts: June 1, 1976.

Fall 1976: Phase Electives. Deadline for receipt of manuscripts: July 15, 1976.

Winter 1976-77: Folklore in the Classroom. Deadline for receipt of manuscripts: October 15, 1976.

Spring 1977: Ethnic Literature in the Classroom. Deadline for receipt of manuscripts: January 15, 1977.

Summer 1977: Literature for Children and Young Adults. Deadline for receipt of manuscripts: April 15, 1977.

Mini-reviews of recent books and teaching materials (no more than 250 words each) concerning the theme for an issue are also invited. Poems are used as filler.

Brief biographical data for our contributors' page should be included with a manuscript.

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced. Footnotes should be incorporated within the text whenever possible. Manuscripts and related correspondence should be sent to James S. Mullican, Department of English and Journalism, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana 47809. A manuscript will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with return postage clipped to it.

## MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

The *Indiana English Journal* is published quarterly and is sent to members of the Indiana Council of Teachers of English. Subscription to non-members is $3.00 per year.

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